

Pinus Laricio and *Pinus ponderosa* seem to withstand the effects of a prolonged drought much more successfully than the other species planted, and it is intended for the future to confine the planting of larch to the hills and slopes as far as possible, and use the pines for the planting of the flat and drier portions of the plantation-areas.

The expenditure for the year amounted to £1,123 13s. 4d., and the expenditure to date is £4,374 4s. 1d.

Details of expenditure for the year and to date are appended.

<i>Expenditure.</i>				£	s.	d.
Amount at 31st March, 1907	...	...	...	3,250	10	9
Pitting ...	...	...	...	48	10	9
Tree-planting ...	...	...	...	66	1	9
Cartage of trees ...	...	...	...	1	2	6
General upkeep of plantation	...	...	...	159	17	6
Horse-feed purchased and grown	...	...	...	33	19	6
Fencing ...	...	...	...	138	16	8
Buildings—prison-camp	...	...	...	379	8	0
Tools, implements, &c.	...	...	...	46	5	6
Miscellaneous works	...	...	...	11	19	0
Prison-camp removal	...	...	...	121	19	2
Salaries—						
Supervision of prison labour	...	...	...	2	11	0
Nurseryman's proportion of, and travelling-expenses	...	...	...	85	0	0
Supervision	...	...	...	28	2	0
				<u>£4,374</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>

T. B. CURLE, Forester in Charge.

DUMGREE PLANTATION.

(Area, 881 acres; altitude, 100 ft.)

The past year has been a very bad one for forestry-work in this locality, and the results at the plantation are far from encouraging. From the effects of the extremely dry weather of the past six months, not only has the last season's planting been a failure, but the plantation all over has suffered severely, and it is estimated that the death-rate over the whole plantation is about 75 per cent. The loss to the Department is to be deplored, and it must also be regretted that the attempt, so far, at afforestation in Marlborough has not been more successful.

Planting was commenced in May and completed early in September, the weather-conditions at that time being all that could be desired. All trees struck well, and up to the end of October everything pointed to the season's work being a success, and it would have been but for the drought that followed.

The total number of trees planted during the year was 494,690. Of this number 266,050 were used to fill up deaths in previous years' planting. It is, however, considered that only about 10 per cent. of what were planted are alive. Among last season's planting no species can be picked out for special mention, all having suffered alike; among previous years' planting, *Pinus ponderosa* and *Robinia pseudo-acacia* have done the best, fewer deaths occurring among these. The last-mentioned are planted on a portion of the stoniest part of the plantation, and it is evident that this tree, when once established, will grow on the poorest soil under very adverse weather-conditions.

The area planted during the year was 84 acres, making a total to date of 469½ acres, the estimated number of trees alive being 350,000.

Free Labour.

Seven thousand four hundred pits were dug, at a cost of £2 16s. 1d. per thousand; 142,826 blanks were reopened, and 86,075 spots scuffed for bar planting, at a cost of £1 11s. 4d. and 18s. 9d. per thousand respectively.

Tree-planting on new area cost £1 2s. 5d. per thousand, and planting up blanks 19s. 11d.

One hundred and twenty-eight chains of fire-breaks, half a chain wide, were ploughed and cleared, at a total cost of £1 19s. 6d.

Prison Labour.

All works undertaken were done in a creditable manner, which in a large measure is due to the care and attention of the prison officers. The Department having decided that no further planting is to be done at Dumgree, the prison camp was in February transferred to Hanmer Springs Plantation.

The value of the work done for the eleven months was £392 1s., of which the following is a summary: Digging 17,000 pits, £53 10s. 7d.; reopening 47,830 pits, £64 15s. 11d.; scuffling 69,350 spots, £61 2s. 3d.; marking 24,000 pits, £8 19s. 9d.; clearing round trees, £56 7s. 2d.; planting trees, £106 9s. 8d.; clearing 115 chains fire-breaks, £13 5s.; opening trenches for trees, £14 13s. 2d.; miscellaneous works, £12 18s. 1d.

The daily average number of prisoners employed for the eleven months was 11·38, and the daily average of free men for the year 7·70.

The expenditure for the year was £1,065 9s. 11d., and the total to date £9,862 7s. 11d.